



## EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE OF THE NORTHEAST DESIGN REVIEW BOARD

Project Number: 3015961

Address: 5755 NE 63rd Street

Applicant: Jeff Wegener, Build Urban

Date of Meeting: Monday, April 07, 2014

Board Members Present: Martine Zettle (Chair)  
Ivana Begley  
Eric Blank  
Christina Pizana

Board Members Absent: Julia Levitt

DPD Staff Present: Lindsay King

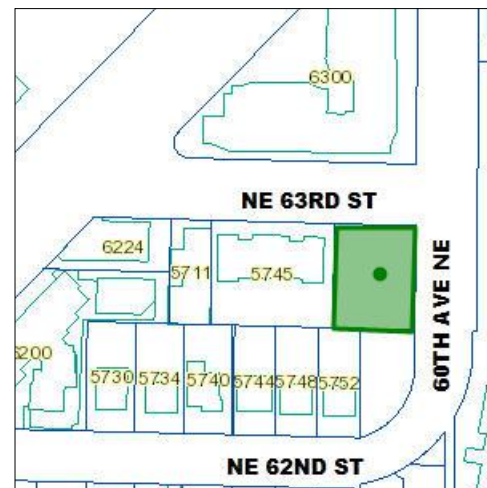
### SITE & VICINITY

Site Zone: Neighborhood Commercial Two (NC2-40)

Nearby Zones: North: NC2-40  
South: SF5000  
East: SF5000  
West: NC2-40

Lot Area: 8,115 sq. ft.

Current Development: Vacant



**Surrounding Development:** The subject site is located on the northwest corner of NE 63rd Street and 60th Avenue NE. The subject lot and lots to the north and west are zoned Neighborhood Commercial Two (NC2-40). Lots to the south and east are zoned Single Family (SF5000). The site contains one parcel with an existing public utility use. The vacant site is surrounded by a fenced enclosure and existing mature screening vegetation including three exceptional trees, two along the south property line and one in the northwest corner. The site contains an approximately 8 foot grade change from the northwest corner, the low point, to the southeast corner, the high point. To the west and north of the subject lot are existing four story apartment buildings. To the south is an existing parking lot accessory to the Sand Point Elementary school which is located across 60th Avenue NE.

**ECAs:** None

**Neighborhood Character:** This neighborhood includes multifamily housing, community services, restaurants and shopping. One block to the northwest is Sand Point Way NE. Sand Point Way NE functions as a major vehicular and transit connector between University of Washington within the Montlake Neighborhood and the development along the west side of Lake Washington. Sand Point Way NE contains a number of multi-story multifamily structures, larger warehouse uses including the National Archives, medical service uses including Children's Hospital and small one story commercial spaces. One block to the north is the Sand Point Magnusson Park. Sandpoint Way NE is generally zoned multifamily, with some pockets of commercial zoning. One block off of Sand Point Way NE, zoning transitions to Single Family (SF500) where the primary uses are single family homes. Within walking distance from the site services are limited but include a restaurant, school and park. Natural amenities in the area include Lake Washington and Sand Point Magnusson Park.

Metro bus routes provide limited service along Sand Point Way. The Burke Gilman Trail is located two blocks to the west providing pedestrian and bicycle service to the north and south to the University of Washington with connections to multiple locations. Sandpoint Way NE is designated as a principal arterial. NE 63<sup>rd</sup> Street and 60<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE have no special classifications.

NE 63<sup>rd</sup> Street is characterized by four story multifamily structures with generous street setbacks containing mature vegetation. The buildings maintain a uniform, multi-story street wall with balconies facing the street. 60<sup>th</sup> Avenue NE is characterized by the existing public school, accessory parking lot and single family homes. Structures are predominately wood frame construction.

## PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Design Review Early Design Guidance for one 4-story structure containing 3 live/work units; one 4-story structure containing 3 townhouse units; and one 3-story unit over a shared garage. Surface parking for 2 vehicles to be provided and parking for 6 vehicles to be located within the structures.

### EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE MEETING: April 7, 2014

## DESIGN PRESENTATION

The EDG packet includes materials presented at the EDG meeting, and is available online by entering the project number (3015961) at this website:

[http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/Planning/Design\\_Review\\_Program/Project\\_Reviews/Reports/default.asp](http://www.seattle.gov/dpd/Planning/Design_Review_Program/Project_Reviews/Reports/default.asp).

The EDG packet is also available to view in the project file (project number 3015961), by contacting the Public Resource Center at DPD:

**Mailing    Public Resource Center**

**Address:** 700 Fifth Ave., Suite 2000  
P.O. Box 34019  
Seattle, WA 98124-4019

**Email:** [PRC@seattle.gov](mailto:PRC@seattle.gov)

## PUBLIC COMMENT

The following comments, issues and concerns were raised during the public comment portion of the Early Design Guidance meeting:

- Felt the proposed building will not fit within the existing neighborhood character.
- Concerned about the height of the proposed structure.
- Noted that existing trees and shrubbery are not well maintained.
- Would like to see the south wall softened with vertical landscaping.
- Noted that on street parking is limited within the neighborhood.
- Would like to see exterior materials respectful of the existing neighborhood residential material context.
- Noted there are a number of beautiful mature trees on the site in addition to the three exceptional trees identified.
- Concerned the proposed design is barren and more landscaping efforts are necessary for the building to fit within the neighborhood.
- Would like to see more open space.

- Felt live-work is not an appropriate use within the residential neighborhood.
- Felt the early design is disappointing.

## PRIORITIES & BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS

After visiting the site, considering the analysis of the site and context provided by the proponents, and hearing public comment, the Design Review Board members provided the following siting and design guidance. The Board identified the Citywide Design Guidelines of highest priority for this project.

### EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE March 19, 2014

**1. Massing.** The Board felt Massing Option 3 provided the better design solution.

- a) The Board preferred the massing option which maintains two exceptional trees within a 15 feet setback along the shared south property line. The Board agreed a dense landscape buffer was necessary within the setback space regardless of whether the Exceptional Trees remained (CS1-D1, CS2-D)
- b) The Board agreed that it would be very hard to maintain the Exceptional Tree along the north property line given the 'lean' in the tree. The Board felt the tree should not be maintained (CS1-D1).
- c) The Board preferred vehicle access on NE 63rd Street. NE 63<sup>rd</sup> Street provides access closer to the main arterial on Sandpoint Way NE and reduces car and pedestrian conflicts next to the elementary school. The Board also noted that 63rd is the low point of the site and generally preferred for vehicle access (PL1-B, DC1-B).
- d) The Board noted Massing Option 3 provides vehicles parking for each unit while also breaking the mass to reduce the apparent bulk facing the single family zone (DC1-B, CS2-D).

**2. Live Work and Townhouse Units.** The Board was concerned about the viability of live work units facing NE 63<sup>rd</sup> Street.

- a) The Board noted that context is important for the success of the live work units, and the Board agreed that this location may not be viable (PL1-B).
- b) The Board felt for live work units to be successful they must be designed for a viable work space, be highly transparent and face NE 63<sup>rd</sup> Street. The Board agreed commercial space must be open and inviting and read as a different language than the townhouse units (PL3-B3).
- c) The Board stated they were open to townhouse units facing NE 63<sup>rd</sup> Street rather than live work units. The Board also noted they would be amenable to departure requests from required street level setbacks for townhouse units provided the space between the townhouse unit and the street was treated appropriately to provide a semiprivate transition space (PL3-B).
- d) The Board noted that the applicant must demonstrate additional efforts to develop the respective streetscapes. The Board agreed the townhouse pedestrian stoops appeared too high for a successful relationship with the sidewalk. The Board felt the floor level should be as close to 4 feet above grade as possible.

- e) The Board noted the street level treatment for townhouse units and live work units should be distinct to distinguish one from the other (PL3-B).
- f) At the Recommendation Meeting, the Board would like to see substantial landscaping, with cues taken from the existing neighborhood context, in the rights-of-way (CS1-D1).

**3. Vehicle Access and Incorporating a Woonerf Design.** The Board would like the applicant to investigate use of a woonerf, with shared vehicular and pedestrian spaces.

- a) The Board felt the site design could be enhanced by creating a shared woonerf space incorporating residential amenity spaces, pedestrian circulation, car access and landscaping. The Board noted that additional details for the programming of the space, paving, lighting and landscaping must be provided. The Board noted that the vehicular function of the space must be minimized for the auto court design to be successful on the site (DC1-B)
- b) The Board felt a woonerf design must include a study of how people access the space. The Board felt the access locations should include a study of communal living and provide spaces for shared life (DC1-B)
- c) At the Recommendation Meeting, the Board would like to see more information about the car movements within the court and the location of private and shared bike facilities (PL4-B).

**3. Architectural Context and Materials.** The Board noted the proposed building is located within a neighborhood with a well-defined material and architectural character.

- a) The Board supported the proposed architectural concept which includes a more contemporary design. The Board felt that the architectural concept should incorporate material and design cues from traditional neighborhood context in order for the building relate to the existing defined character (CS3-A, DC4-A).
- b) The Board requested a thorough analysis of the existing neighborhood architectural context. At the Recommendation Meeting, the Board would like to see how the evolution of the site design, architectural concept is responsive and complementary to the existing neighborhood context and material application. The Board suggested that an analysis of existing exemplary design case studies in the neighborhood be developed to inform the design progress. The Board noted that Radford Court provided a good example of modern architecture in a more traditional setting (CS3-A, DC4-A).
- c) The Board would like more information showing how the design parti and material application will reduce the scale of the building, particularly on the facades facing the residential use to the west and the single family zone to the south (DC2-A, B and D DC4-A).

**4. Maximize Privacy.** The development should provide privacy for the adjacent structures.

- a) The Board requested a privacy study in elevation views documenting existing windows whose privacy will be impacted by proposed development. The location of existing windows should inform the location of proposed windows. (CS2-D5).

## DESIGN REVIEW GUIDELINES

The priority Citywide and Neighborhood guidelines are summarized below. For the full text please visit the [Design Review website](#).

### CONTEXT & SITE

**CS1 Natural Systems and Site Features: Use natural systems/features of the site and its surroundings as a starting point for project design.**

#### **CS1-B Sunlight and Natural Ventilation**

**CS1-B-1. Sun and Wind:** Take advantage of solar exposure and natural ventilation. Use local wind patterns and solar gain to reduce the need for mechanical ventilation and heating where possible.

**CS1-B-2. Daylight and Shading:** Maximize daylight for interior and exterior spaces and minimize shading on adjacent sites through the placement and/or design of structures on site.

**CS1-B-3. Managing Solar Gain:** Manage direct sunlight falling on south and west facing facades through shading devices and existing or newly planted trees.

#### **CS1-C Topography**

**CS1-C-1. Land Form:** Use natural topography and desirable landforms to inform project design.

**CS1-C-2. Elevation Changes:** Use the existing site topography when locating structures and open spaces on the site.

#### **CS1-D Plants and Habitat**

**CS1-D-1. On-Site Features:** Incorporate on-site natural habitats and landscape elements into project design and connect those features to existing networks of open spaces and natural habitats wherever possible. Consider relocating significant trees and vegetation if retention is not feasible.

**CS2 Urban Pattern and Form: Strengthen the most desirable forms, characteristics, and patterns of the streets, block faces, and open spaces in the surrounding area.**

#### **CS2-B Adjacent Sites, Streets, and Open Spaces**

**CS2-B-2. Connection to the Street:** Identify opportunities for the project to make a strong connection to the street and public realm.

#### **CS2-D Height, Bulk, and Scale**

**CS2-D-1. Existing Development and Zoning:** Review the height, bulk, and scale of neighboring buildings as well as the scale of development anticipated by zoning for the area to determine an appropriate complement and/or transition.

**CS2-D-2. Existing Site Features:** Use changes in topography, site shape, and vegetation or structures to help make a successful fit with adjacent properties.

**CS2-D-3. Zone Transitions:** For projects located at the edge of different zones, provide an appropriate transition or complement to the adjacent zone(s). Projects should create a step in perceived height, bulk and scale between the anticipated development potential of the adjacent zone and the proposed development.

**CS2-D-4. Massing Choices:** Strive for a successful transition between zones where a project abuts a less intense zone.

**CS2-D-5. Respect for Adjacent Sites:** Respect adjacent properties with design and site planning to minimize disrupting the privacy of residents in adjacent buildings.

**CS3 Architectural Context and Character: Contribute to the architectural character of the neighborhood.**

**CS3-A Emphasizing Positive Neighborhood Attributes**

**CS3-A-1. Fitting Old and New Together:** Create compatibility between new projects, and existing architectural context, including historic and modern designs, through building articulation, scale and proportion, roof forms, detailing, fenestration, and/or the use of complementary materials.

**CS3-A-2. Contemporary Design:** Explore how contemporary designs can contribute to the development of attractive new forms and architectural styles; as expressed through use of new materials or other means.

**CS3-A-3. Established Neighborhoods:** In existing neighborhoods with a well-defined architectural character, site and design new structures to complement or be compatible with the architectural style and siting patterns of neighborhood buildings.

**CS3-A-4. Evolving Neighborhoods:** In neighborhoods where architectural character is evolving or otherwise in transition, explore ways for new development to establish a positive and desirable context for others to build upon in the future.

**PUBLIC LIFE**

**PL1 Connectivity: Complement and contribute to the network of open spaces around the site and the connections among them.**

**PL1-B Walkways and Connections**

**PL1-B-1. Pedestrian Infrastructure:** Connect on-site pedestrian walkways with existing public and private pedestrian infrastructure, thereby supporting pedestrian connections within and outside the project.

**PL1-B-2. Pedestrian Volumes:** Provide ample space for pedestrian flow and circulation, particularly in areas where there is already heavy pedestrian traffic or where the project is expected to add or attract pedestrians to the area.

**PL1-B-3. Pedestrian Amenities:** Opportunities for creating lively, pedestrian oriented open spaces to enliven the area and attract interest and interaction with the site and building should be considered.

**PL2 Walkability: Create a safe and comfortable walking environment that is easy to navigate and well-connected to existing pedestrian walkways and features.**

**PL2-B Safety and Security**

**PL2-B-1. Eyes on the Street:** Create a safe environment by providing lines of sight and encouraging natural surveillance.

**PL2-B-2. Lighting for Safety:** Provide lighting at sufficient lumen intensities and scales, including pathway illumination, pedestrian and entry lighting, and/or security lights.

**PL2-B-3. Street-Level Transparency:** Ensure transparency of street-level uses (for uses such as nonresidential uses or residential lobbies), where appropriate, by keeping views open into spaces behind walls or plantings, at corners, or along narrow passageways.

**PL2-C Weather Protection**

**PL2-C-1. Locations and Coverage:** Overhead weather protection is encouraged and should be located at or near uses that generate pedestrian activity such as entries, retail uses, and transit stops.

**PL2-C-2. Design Integration:** Integrate weather protection, gutters and downspouts into the design of the structure as a whole, and ensure that it also relates well to neighboring buildings in design, coverage, or other features.

**PL2-C-3. People-Friendly Spaces:** Create an artful and people-friendly space beneath building.

**PL3 Street-Level Interaction: Encourage human interaction and activity at the street-level with clear connections to building entries and edges.**

**PL3-A Entries**

**PL3-A-1. Design Objectives:** Design primary entries to be obvious, identifiable, and distinctive with clear lines of sight and lobbies visually connected to the street.

**PL3-A-2. Common Entries:** Multi-story residential buildings need to provide privacy and security for residents but also be welcoming and identifiable to visitors.

**PL3-A-3. Individual Entries:** Ground-related housing should be scaled and detailed appropriately to provide for a more intimate type of entry.

**PL3-A-4. Ensemble of Elements:** Design the entry as a collection of coordinated elements including the door(s), overhead features, ground surface, landscaping, lighting, and other features.

**PL3-B Residential Edges**

**PL3-B-1. Security and Privacy:** Provide security and privacy for residential buildings through the use of a buffer or semi-private space between the development and the street or neighboring buildings.

**PL3-B-2. Ground-level Residential:** Privacy and security issues are particularly important in buildings with ground-level housing, both at entries and where windows are located overlooking the street.

**PL3-B-3. Buildings with Live/Work Uses:** Maintain active and transparent facades in the design of live/work residences. Design the first floor so it can be adapted to other commercial use as needed in the future.

**PL3-B-4. Interaction:** Provide opportunities for interaction among residents and neighbors.

**PL4 Active Transportation: Incorporate design features that facilitate active forms of transportation such as walking, bicycling, and use of transit.**

**PL4-B Planning Ahead for Bicyclists**

**PL4-B-2. Bike Facilities:** Facilities such as bike racks and storage, bike share stations, shower facilities and lockers for bicyclists should be located to maximize convenience, security, and safety.



## DESIGN CONCEPT

### **DC1 Project Uses and Activities: Optimize the arrangement of uses and activities on site.**

#### **DC1-B Vehicular Access and Circulation**

**DC1-B-1. Access Location and Design:** Choose locations for vehicular access, service uses, and delivery areas that minimize conflict between vehicles and non-motorists wherever possible. Emphasize use of the sidewalk for pedestrians, and create safe and attractive conditions for pedestrians, bicyclists, and drivers.

#### **DC1-C Parking and Service Uses**

**DC1-C-2. Visual Impacts:** Reduce the visual impacts of parking lots, parking structures, entrances, and related signs and equipment as much as possible.

**DC1-C-3. Multiple Uses:** Design parking areas to serve multiple uses such as children's play space, outdoor gathering areas, sports courts, woonerf, or common space in multifamily projects.

**DC1-C-4. Service Uses:** Locate and design service entries, loading docks, and trash receptacles away from pedestrian areas or to a less visible portion of the site to reduce possible impacts of these facilities on building aesthetics and pedestrian circulation.

### **DC2 Architectural Concept: Develop an architectural concept that will result in a unified and functional design that fits well on the site and within its surroundings.**

#### **DC2-A Massing**

**DC2-A-1. Site Characteristics and Uses:** Arrange the mass of the building taking into consideration the characteristics of the site and the proposed uses of the building and its open space.

**DC2-A-2. Reducing Perceived Mass:** Use secondary architectural elements to reduce the perceived mass of larger projects.

#### **DC2-B Architectural and Facade Composition**

**DC2-B-1. Façade Composition:** Design all building facades—including alleys and visible roofs—considering the composition and architectural expression of the building as a whole. Ensure that all facades are attractive and well-proportioned.

**DC2-B-2. Blank Walls:** Avoid large blank walls along visible façades wherever possible. Where expanses of blank walls, retaining walls, or garage facades are unavoidable, include uses or design treatments at the street level that have human scale and are designed for pedestrians.

#### **DC2-D Scale and Texture**

**DC2-D-1. Human Scale:** Incorporate architectural features, elements, and details that are of human scale into the building facades, entries, retaining walls, courtyards, and exterior spaces in a manner that is consistent with the overall architectural concept

**DC2-D-2. Texture:** Design the character of the building, as expressed in the form, scale, and materials, to strive for a fine-grained scale, or "texture," particularly at the street level and other areas where pedestrians predominate.

#### **DC2-E Form and Function**

**DC2-E-1. Legibility and Flexibility:** Strive for a balance between building use legibility and flexibility. Design buildings such that their primary functions and uses can be readily determined from the exterior, making the building easy to access and understand. At the same time, design flexibility into the building so that it may remain useful over time even as specific programmatic needs evolve.

**DC4 Exterior Elements and Finishes: Use appropriate and high quality elements and finishes for the building and its open spaces.**

**DC4-A Exterior Elements and Finishes**

**DC4-A-1. Exterior Finish Materials:** Building exteriors should be constructed of durable and maintainable materials that are attractive even when viewed up close. Materials that have texture, pattern, or lend themselves to a high quality of detailing are encouraged.

**DC4-A-2. Climate Appropriateness:** Select durable and attractive materials that will age well in Seattle's climate, taking special care to detail corners, edges, and transitions.

**DC4-C Lighting**

**DC4-C-1. Functions:** Use lighting both to increase site safety in all locations used by pedestrians and to highlight architectural or landscape details and features such as entries, signs, canopies, plantings, and art.

**DC4-C-2. Avoiding Glare:** Design project lighting based upon the uses on and off site, taking care to provide illumination to serve building needs while avoiding off-site night glare and light pollution.

**DC4-D Trees, Landscape, and Hardscape Materials**

**DC4-D-1. Choice of Plant Materials:** Reinforce the overall architectural and open space design concepts through the selection of landscape materials.

**DC4-D-2. Hardscape Materials:** Use exterior courtyards, plazas, and other hard surfaced areas as an opportunity to add color, texture, and/or pattern and enliven public areas through the use of distinctive and durable paving materials. Use permeable materials wherever possible.

**DC4-D-3. Long Range Planning:** Select plants that upon maturity will be of appropriate size, scale, and shape to contribute to the site as intended.

**DC4-D-4. Place Making:** Create a landscape design that helps define spaces with significant elements such as trees.

**DEVELOPMENT STANDARD DEPARTURES**

At the time of the Early Design Guidance no design review departures were requested.

**BOARD DIRECTION**

At the conclusion of the EARLY DESIGN GUIDANCE meeting, the Board recommended moving forward to MUP application.